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Keep your New Year's intentions. 16

Meet the ladies of 'Mozart in the Jungle.' 13

Mike Piazza enters Hall as Met. 18

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NEXT STOP?

Governor proposes $3 billion redesign of 'miserable' Penn Station. 8

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NETFLIX SKIPS CHINA

1 Video streaming company Netflix on Wednesday launched its services in 130 countries, covering almost the entire globe except China, as part of efforts to counter slowing growth in the United States. Shares of the company, whose popular shows include "House of Cards", "Orange Is the New Black" and "Narcos," rose 5.5 percent to $113.60 in afternoon trading. REUTERS

2ND GRAY DEATH TRIAL

2 On Wednesday a Maryland judge rejected a request to move the trial of a Baltimore police officer charged with murder in connection with the death of Freddie Gray out of the city. Gray died in April while in police custody. Baltimore City Circuit Court Judge Barry Williams denied a request by lawyers for Officer Caesar Goodson Jr., one of six officers facing criminal charges related to the incident, to move the trial out of the city due to the intense publicity that surrounded the riots that followed Gray's death. REUTERS

CHIPOTLE SUBPOENA

3 Chipotle said it was served with a grand jury subpoena in a federal criminal probe linked to a norovirus case in California last year. Shares of the chain fell over 5 percent to $424.13, as the company grapples with a wave of norovirus and E. coli outbreaks that have sickened customers and battered sales. REUTERS

THREE KINGS PARADE

7 Live camels, colorful puppets and dancers marched down the streets of East Harlem on Wednesday morning for the 39th Annual Three Kings Day Parade. Since 1978, El Museo del Barrio has celebrated the popular Puerto Rican and Latin American tradition by putting together the community parade. The day honors the moment the kings or wise men – Melchor, Gaspar and Balthasar – came bearing the gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh to baby Jesus in Bethlehem. The parade ended with a celebration for all ages featuring traditional Puerto Rican music and food. ANGY ALTAMIRANO

7 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

MAIN PHOTOS BY PAUL LACHENAUER, ALL OTHER PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES

WOMAN'S FACE SLASHED

4 A woman walking to work early Wednesday morning was slashed on the face by a stranger, CBS reports. The incident occurred on 23rd Street and Seventh Avenue in Chelsea around 5:50 a.m. After the attack the woman sought help in the Malibu Diner on 23rd Street. MATT LEE

APPLE FALLS BELOW $100

5 Apple shares Wednesday dropped below $100 for the first time in nearly five months following reports of slowing shipments of its iPhone 6S and 6S Plus. In afternoon trading, the stock briefly traded as low as $96.96, its lowest level since Aug. 24, a day when the entire stock market suffered a "flash crash." Apple shares traded as low as $92 that day. Apple shares have not closed below $100 since Oct. 20, 2014. The shares were last at $100.08 in late-afternoon trading. REUTERS

ARREST IN FIRST MURDER

6 Police have arrested a Queens man for the murder of his young girlfriend — the city's first homicide in 2016 — who was found face down on her bed inside her apartment. Fabian Maliza, 24, is being charged with second-degree murder and as of Wednesday morning was awaiting arraignment in Queens. According to authorities, on Jan. 1 police discovered 19-year-old Joceline Romo unconscious and unresponsive lying face down on her bed inside her Woodhaven, Queens, home. ANGY ALTAMIRANO

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NYers hope more is done on guns

According to a local advocacy, New York suffers from guns trafficked from other states with weaker gun laws.

ANGY ALTAMIRANO
@MetroNewYork
letters@metro.us

A seller discusses a gun with a buyer. GETTY IMAGES

Although New York is already known for its strong gun laws, some are hoping President Barack Obama's plans to strengthen gun control throughout the nation will help keep the state out of violence's way.

Wiping back tears, Obama explained on Tuesday the new steps his administration will be taking to tighten gun rules in the nation — while also calling on voters to chose a candidate that could continue to do more.

These steps include the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) issuing guidelines planned to narrow exceptions in the system which requires sellers to check with the FBI to determine if a buyer has a criminal record, is charged with crimes or have mental health conditions.

There will also be an increase in ATF involvement to keep guns out of dangerous hands and provide more funds for improving mental health treatment.

"New York suffers from guns that are trafficked in from other states where these kinds of gun sellers do not currently have to conduct criminal background checks," Leah Gunn Barrett, executive director of NYAGV told Metro. "By cutting down on the number of these sellers, it follows that it will be harder for traffickers to procure the same volume of guns to traffic into our state."

Barrett, who attended Obama's announcement, added that she hopes the president's plan will also push stricter laws within New York, such as prohibiting individuals on the no-fly list from buying guns in the sate and mandate guns bought in the state to be microstamped.

In 2013, Gov. Andrew Cuomo signed the NY SAFE Act (Secure Ammunition and Firearms Enforcement Act) giving New York state the toughest laws in the nation.

The legislation includes keeping guns out of the hands of convicted felons and potentially dangerous mental health patients, while also banning high capacity magazines and assault weapons.

Under the NY SAFE Act, New York became the first in the nation to ban any magazine which can hold more than seven rounds.

"New York has led the way on gun control — enacting the toughest laws in the nation after Sandy Hook where 20 children and six adults were tragically murdered. But there is still more we must do together as a nation," Cuomo said.

However, even with the steps forward, there is still hope more can be done to make sure New Yorkers can be kept safe — along with the rest of the country.

"For all the progress we have made in New York state on this issue, the lack of federal gun control continues to leave our communities in the line of fire," the governor said.

NY gun stats

According to a report by advocacy group New Yorkers Against Gun Violence — compiled by information from ATF — in 2014, 82 percent of traced crime guns in New York originated from outside the state.

Shootings in New York City were down to 1,137 incidents in 2015, which was less than 2014 but higher than the city's lowest number in 2013, according to the NYPD's recent crime numbers.

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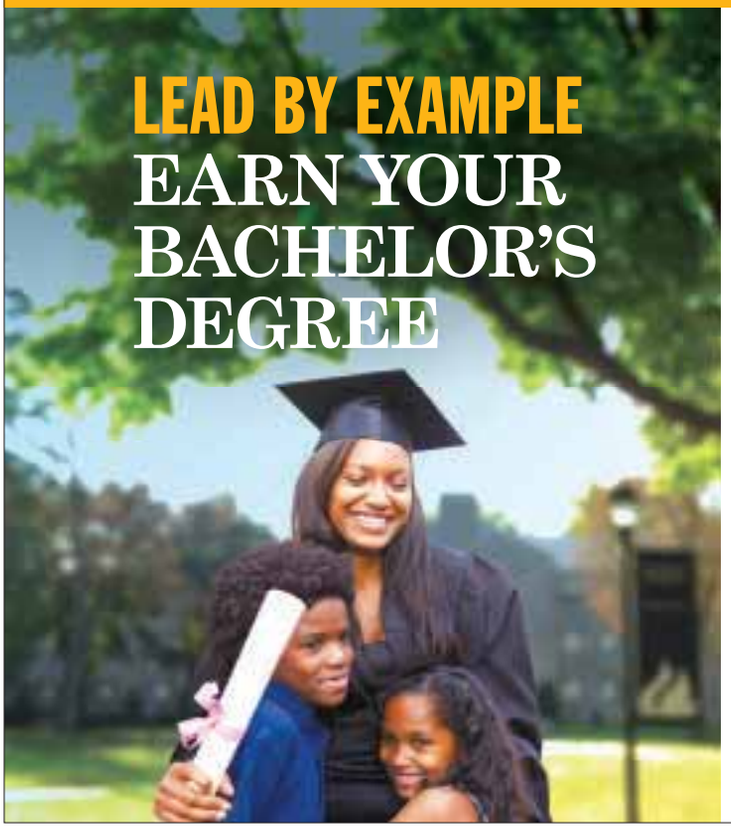

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BRIEF

Serial spitter is targeting people in Prospect-Lefferts Garden

A man alleged to have spit in the face of more than a dozen random passersby near Prospect Park is being sought by disgusted area residents as police have received several complaints.

Described as a tall, slender black man in his 20s or 30s, the spitter has often been seen wearing a hoodie, CBS reported, adding that of his victims, at least two were children.

Prospect-Lefferts Gardens residents are swapping stories on Facebook and in person about how they, or people they know, have been targeted by the spitter, the New York Daily News reported.

"Be on the lookout," one poster on Facebook was quoted by the Daily News. "About 20 minutes ago, a young man wearing all black randomly decided to scream 'f– you' and spit in my face."

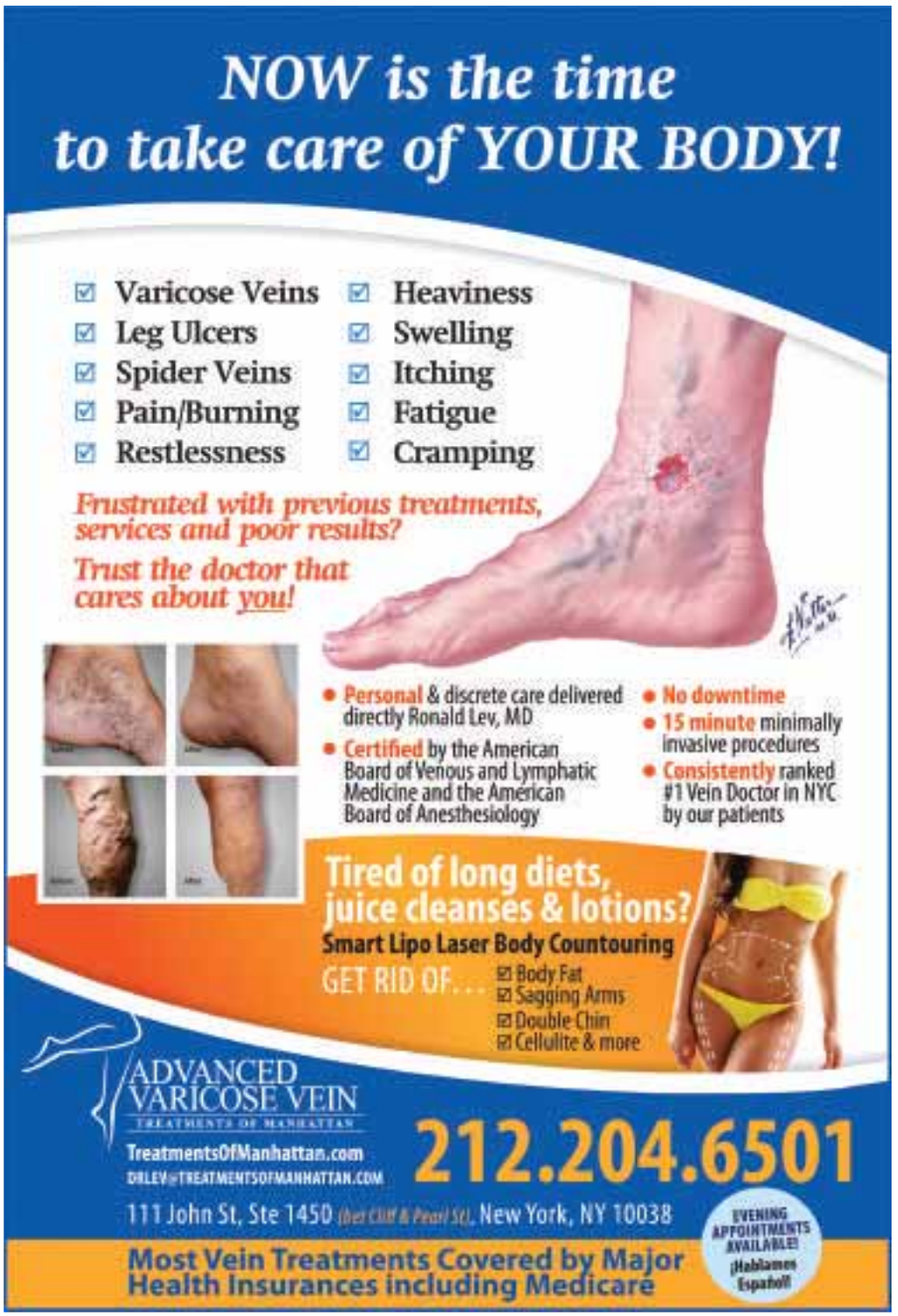
Frank Bulzoni of the 71st Precinct told DNAinfo that police are aware of the problem, but securing an arrest may be difficult because spitting on a person is harassment, not an arrestable offense.

Even so, he encouraged all victims to report incidents to authorities.

The incidents' specific dates are unknown but most are thought to have taken place over the last two months, according to the Daily News.

Anyone with information should call police at 718-735-0527 or email Frank.Bulzoni@nypd.org, DNAinfo added.

METRO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Medical marijuana starts today

The CEO of Columbia Care dispensary is Nicholas Vita, a former investment banker. BESS ADLER

An inside look at NYC's first medical marijuana dispensary.

ANGY ALTAMIRANO
@MetroNewYork
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New York City's first medical marijuana dispensary is channeling Mother Nature to help ease the suffering of people battling debilitating illness.

Columbia Care LLC — one of five companies, which were licensed to produce and sell medical marijuana in the state — will open the city's first dispensary on Thursday.

"We're just so excited because there's this moment where you actually meet patients and you realize that this is something that a lot of people who have dealt with some very serious illnesses have really relied on," said Nicholas Vita, CEO of Columbia Care.

The dispensary is located at 212 East 14th Street in Manhattan and will only serve patients who are previously approved by the state and recommended by a physician, who has been trained and certified by the state's Department of Health.

Upon walking into the facility's front doors, patients must first present their registry identification card at the front desk window — anyone who fails to show the card will be turned away.

In order to qualify, patients must suffer from conditions such as cancer, HIV infection or AIDS, ALS, Parkinson's diseases, multiple sclerosis, spinal cord injury with spasticity, epilepsy, inflammatory bowel disease, neuropathy or Huntington's disease.

"[This plant] does improve lives of people who haven't necessarily gotten the type of outcomes they were hoping for using standard care and some of these very serious pharmaceutical products," Vita said.

Once inside, patients spend some time in a waiting room before meeting with a pharmacist to discuss treatment options. The only forms available at the dispensary will be tinctures, concentrate for vaporization or capsules.

Any smoking, infused or edible forms of marijuana are prohibited in the state.

According to Vita, once patients arrive — some who might have dealt with chemotherapy earlier in the day — the mission is to make them feel comfortable, as though they are part of a community.

"We want to be an open book and we want to make sure that people know that we exist to serve patients," Vita said. "It's a real opportunity for people to consider this as a suitable alternative and form of treatment."

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Cuomo's ambitious plan for Penn Station

New Yorkers and visitors alike are going to witness a grand transformation the likes of which New York has not seen in a century — one of which will cost an estimated $3 billion.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced Wednesday that the state is willing to invest billions in infrastructure statewide. An integral part of statewide infrastructure improvements will include accepting proposals for a public-private partnership to completely overhaul Penn Station.

Cuomo said that the winning private developer may foot the cost — in exchange for retail and commercial rights.

Saying that the station is the most traversed in the hemisphere, Cuomo added that the hub's cavernous, labyrinthine design is counter to New York's spirit. "It is dark. It is constrained. It is dated. It is a lost opportunity," Cuomo declared. "Frankly, it's a miserable experience."

As such, the governor said that as part of a massive overhaul of the state's infrastructure, the state will solicit proposals to bring Penn Station into the 21st century, including:

Penn Station renderings OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

• Closing 33rd Street and using skylights and a new entrance to bring natural light to the concourse below. Removing the MSG theater to create an 8th Avenue "grand entrance" with commerce, retail and commercial space with a block-long entrance to Penn Station across the street from Farley Post Office.

• Opening the new site through new entrances at the corners and mid-block at MSG and Penn "so you take the four corner entrances, and you take the mid-block entrance, and you open them up," Cuomo explained. "Again, the common theme is access, light and air into Penn Station." Creating a Seventh Avenue "grand entrance."

• Undergoing no major exterior renovations but instead focusing on the inside of Penn Station "so you'd have better navigation in Penn, wider concourses, a better passenger experience," Cuomo said.

• Under that plan, the state would "be redeveloping the Farley Post Office" too with the two complexes being joined underground.

Cuomo added that joining the proposed redeveloped Farley Post Office and Penn Station will "double the capacity if not triple the capacity, which will make one complex which we call the Empire State Station."

The state plans to start accepting proposals for the redevelopment this week and will be accepting plans for the next 90 days.

The construction cost is expected to cost in excess of $3 billion, of which $325 million will come from government sources, including USDOT, Port Authority and Amtrak.

Though work will be "expedited," according to the governor's office, completion is estimated to be completed in the next three years, with Farley opening before Penn Station's redevelopment is finished.

Touching on the time it's taken to seriously address the station's deficiencies, Cuomo was characteristically candid.

"What is amazing is how long it has been tolerated," he said. "It's not like Penn was a secret. It has gone on for decade after decade after decade."

JOSH KRUGER

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US officials, experts cast doubt on North Korea's H-bomb claim

It was the fourth time that North Korea has exploded a nuclear device.

North Korea said it successfully tested a powerful nuclear bomb on Wednesday, drawing criticism from world powers even though experts and the U.S. government doubt that the isolated nation's atomic weapons capability is as advanced as Pyongyang claims.

It unnerved neighbors South Korea and Japan and prompted an emergency meeting on Wednesday of the U.N. Security Council in New York.

While a nuclear test had long been expected, North Korea's assertion that it exploded a hydrogen device, much more powerful than an atomic bomb, came as a surprise. The White House said North Korea might not in fact have tested a hydrogen bomb.

The explosion caused an earthquake that was measured by the United States Geological Survey.

Pyongyang also said it was capable of miniaturizing, allowing a nuclear device to be adapted as a weapon and placed on a missile, potentially posing a new threat to the United States and its allies in Asia.

While the Kim government boasts of its military might to project strength globally, it also plays up the need to defend itself from external threats as a way to maintain control domestically.

The test drew world criticism, including from China and Russia. China, the major trade partner of North Korea, said it will lodge a protest with Pyongyang.

White House spokesman Josh Earnest said any nuclear test would be a "flagrant violation" of U.N. Security Council resolutions. "The initial analysis is not consistent with the claim the regime has made of a successful

"Let the world look up to the strong, self-reliant nuclear-armed state."

Leader Kim Jong Un wrote in what North Korean state TV displayed as a handwritten note

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Symbicort 160/4.5ug	360 ds	$194.99	Flovent 110mcg	360 ds	$114.99
Cymbalta 60mg	100	$174.99	Niaspan 500mg	84	$ 84.99
Namenda 10mg	84	$ 97.99	Boniva 150mg	3	$ 49.99
Nexium 40mg	90	$109.99	Xifaxan 200mg	100	$139.99
Diovan 160mg	100	$ 72.99	Multaq 400mg	180	$574.99
Aggrenox 200/25mg	200	$121.99	Flomax 0.4mg	90	$ 49.99
Entocort 3mg	100	$109.99	Ranexa ER 1000mg	100	$114.99
Propecia 1mg	100	$ 69.99	Bystolic 5mg	84	$ 94.99
Januvia 100mg	90	$209.99	Benicar 40mg	90	$114.99
Quinine 300mg	100	$ 74.99	Lipitor 20mg	84	$ 28.99
Ventolin 90mcg	600 ds	$ 59.99	Actos 30mg	90	$ 33.99
Pentasa 500mg	100	$109.99	Vytorin 10/40mg	90	$134.99
Avodart 0.5mg	90	$ 99.99	Aricept 10mg	84	$ 30.99
Pradaxa 150mg	180	$459.99	Effexor XR 150mg	28	$ 44.99
Vagifem 10mcg	24	$ 94.99	Vesicare 5mg	90	$109.99
Xarelto 20mg	84	$444.99	Synthroid 125mcg	90	$ 39.99
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Japan's meteorological agency officer Yohei Hasegawa displays a chart showing seismic activity after a North Korean nuclear test. GETTY IMAGES

hydrogen bomb test," he told reporters.

Conventional atomic bombs split atoms from heavier elements such as uranium or plutonium. They occur in one stage. The process is called fission. Hydrogen bombs have a second stage after fission. This fusion stage releases more energy.

North Korea has been under U.N. Security Council sanctions since it first tested an atomic device in 2006 and could face additional measures.

The Security Council said it would begin working immediately on significant new measures in response to North Korea, a threat diplomats said could mean an expansion of U.N. sanctions against Pyongyang.

It likely will take several days to determine more precisely what kind of nuclear device Pyongyang set off as a variety of sensors, including "sniffer planes," collect evidence.

South Korean intelligence officials and several analysts also questioned whether Wednesday's explosion was a test of a full-fledged hydrogen device, pointing to its having been roughly as powerful as North Korea's last atomic test in 2013.

Stocks across the world fell for a fifth consecutive day as the North Korea tension added to a growing list of geopolitical worries and China fueled fears about its economy by allowing the yuan to weaken further.

No countries were given advance warning of a nuclear test, South Korea's intelligence service said, according to lawmakers briefed by intelligence officials.

In previous such tests, Pyongyang had notified China, Russia and the United States beforehand, they said. REUTERS

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Let's obsess over Amy Schumer's boyfriend

Big news! Everyone's pretend best friend — or, if you're lucky enough to be Jennifer Lawrence, your actual best friend — Amy Schumer has a new man in her life. And describing him will probably make you jealous: Schumer is reportedly dating Chicago-based custom furniture-maker Ben Hanisch, according to E! News. So, you know, he's good with his hands and knows how to keep warm in the winter. Oh, and he's totally into being effusive about his lady, which is a definite plus. Hanisch posted a photo of him and Schumer early this week with the touching caption, "Sometimes in life you get extremely lucky, and the smartest, funniest, most beautiful woman comes along when you least expect it. Here's to what adventures 2016 brings!" Oh, and apparently things are serious enough that he got to tag along to the White House this week with her. Are you overcome with jealousy yet?

ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Madonna's feud with son is over a cellphone, apparently

So all this trouble Madonna is having with her teenage son, Rocco? Apparently it all comes down to a fight mother and son had over how much he's allowed to use his phone, according to the Mirror. The fight apparently took place during her "Rebel Heart" tour, which the 15-year-old promptly stormed off of after their spat. "Madonna is quite firm with Rocco, and she took his phone from him when it interfered with his studies," a source says. "She is stricter than Guy [Ritchie], and Rocco doesn't like it. When she took the phone away, it pushed him over the edge." And over to London, where he sought refuge with Dad, sparking this whole impending custody battle. Fun times.

@MarkRuffalo
Have a great day!

@FINALLEVEL
Winter is officially here in NYC.... And it sucks.

@lenadunham
I don't want to speak out of school but you know who seems really rude? Charles Manson.

@lorde
i bought a borrowed suit and learned to dance

@Courtney
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The fierce women of 'Mozart in the Jungle'

Lola Kirke, Saffron Burrows and Bernadette Peters dish on the new season of their Amazon Prime show.

MATT PRIGGE
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matt.prigge@metro.us

On "Mozart in the Jungle," whose second season now streams on Amazon Prime, Lola Kirke plays aspiring oboist Hailey, Saffron Burrows cellist Cynthia and Bernadette Peters orchestra exec Gloria. AMAZON

On "Mozart in the Jungle," the characters played by Lola Kirke, Saffron Burrows and Bernadette Peters represent three generations of women involved in a New York City orchestra. During the Amazon Prime show's second season, their characters — respectively, oboist Hailey, cellist Cynthia and orchestra director Gloria — struggle with their personal lives as well as with an industry in flux. We briefly spoke about changing times and not quite faking their instruments.

Like Netflix, Amazon Prime releases every single episode of its new seasons in one fell swoop. Do you binge-watch?

Bernadette Peters: I did that with "Breaking Bad."

Saffron Burrows: I just binge-watched four episodes of "Transparent" in one evening.

Lola Kirke: There are certain movies I wish were longer. Some movies I'm like, "I wish this was over half an hour ago." But some I wish I could know those characters more and see their development.

Saffron and Lola, neither of you is a professional musician, and you have to fake playing your instruments —

Burrows: We don't fake.

Kirke: I fake. The only thing I can play is the solo from Beethoven's Fifth. It's four notes long. If I say I can play the solo in Beethoven's Fifth, then you'd think I'm really good. But there's a big difference between playing a piece on the oboe and just sounding notes on it. It's hard to even sound a note on an oboe because it's a ridiculous instrument.

Burrows: You look like you're playing it. I just learn 90 seconds of everything. And when the camera keeps rolling, I'm really in trouble.

Gloria is on the management side. Do any of you tend to get involved with the business angle of your industries?

Kirke: It's hard. To understand the industry and understand why you're getting rejected all the time or why you're getting accepted all the time, that can be really interesting. It's a really difficult industry. It's beneficial to understand what's happening — that if something's not working out, it might not be that you're untalented. Or if it is working out, it's also not necessarily because of you. It's humbling.

Peters: I try not to focus on it a lot. I try to stay on the creative side.

Togetherness

"Mozart in the Jungle" is very interesting in the way it presents most of its female relationships as supportive.

Peters: We're a very supportive cast for each other. It's a real thing.

Kirke: The writers are right to show supportive roles. But you also see characters like Betty [an older oboist, played by Debra Monk], who's less supportive. You see the ways in which people can make enemies of each other. In any creative industry, it's important you find your mentors and the people who support you.

Hopefully, you have someone who does that for you. I had a manager for years, then I was kind of my own manager, as far as me saying, "I'm not going to do that." But you really don't want to be involved in that stuff. I hate it.

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David Cross says

The "Todd Margaret" star tells us the truth.

MARGARET H. WILLISON
MrsFridayNext
letters@metro.us

David Cross's very funny series, "The Increasingly Poor Decisions of Todd Margaret," returns to IFC on Jan. 7 after a three-year hiatus. The second season ended with the end of the world (literally), so the 51-year-old star and creator had some serious storyboarding to do before bringing his show back to TV.

We caught up with the comedian, who incidentally also just announced his first stand-up tour in six years, ahead of the premiere.

Season 2 of this show ended with Todd Margaret blowing up the entire world. How do you revive a show that ended with the apocalypse?

The short answer is, I didn't. I had no intention of revisiting the show. It felt complete. I thought we'd done a really good job there, and told the story from beginning to end just the way we had meant to. Then IFC poked me about doing a third series and I said, "No no no no no no no, but out of common courtesy and professionalism, I will approach the other writers and see if there's any ideas that they have, because I can't think of one."

Within an hour, Mark Chappell wrote up this amazing idea that was so good that I stood there going ,"Shit. I've got to do this again. I'm going to have to do this. I'm going to have to go back to London for another nine months and be away from friends and family and my dog and my house." That's how good the idea was.

To what degree will viewers be lost watching Season 3 if they missed Seasons 1 and 2?

No, not really. Here's the difference: If you go to the Museum of Modern Art, and you're looking at some big painting, like a Mark Rothko or a Jackson Pollock, you might look at it and

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he's a 'terrible liar'

go, "Huh, that's kind of interesting, I guess," and then you walk away. The difference between that experience and looking at that piece with someone pointing out what's interesting about this painting [is that] you walk away with a greater appreciation of it [with context.]

Both people who viewed the painting enjoyed it, but one person is going to enjoy it on a much deeper level. I would say, that would be true of someone who watches Season 3 without seeing the first two.

On the show, Todd Margaret is portrayed as a nearly pathological liar. Are you much of a liar? Can you remember the last lie that you told?

I'm sure the last lie I told was something like, "Oh, yeah, I enjoyed it. Really good show!" or something to that effect, but I am a terrible liar. I get sweaty and I kind of get outside myself and I can see how the person is looking at me and I feel like I'm giving off a million tells and everyone can see I'm lying.

Both your wife, Amber Tamblyn, and her dad, Russ Tamblyn, play guest roles on the show. Two questions: Is it weird to mix family life and professional life like that? And is there any chance that Russ will break out some of his "West Side Story" dances moves?

No, there is no chance of the latter happening. Russ had open heart surgery shortly before he had to fly out to London, so we were already crossing our fingers, just hoping he'd recover in time. We were very lucky to get him but, yeah, no dancing.

As for mixing family life and professional life, it's great. Any time I get to work with my wife is a treat. She's really funny and it's great to have her on set, and the same is true of Russ. I'm extremely lucky to be able to do stuff where I can employ them and pay their way over to London, you know?

Will Arnett with Cross on third season of "Todd Margaret. ALL PHOTOS COLIN HUTTON/IFC

Listings

FILM

First Look Festival

Jan. 8-24
Museum of Moving Image
36-01 35th Ave., Queens
$12-$40, Movingimage.us
See it first at the Museum of Moving Image's exceptional and unconventional film festival. More than 50 international films will screen over 17 days, including several national premieres and three retrospectives.

TRAVEL

The New York Times Travel Show

Jan. 8-10
Javits Center, 655 W. 34th St.
$20-$79, NYTtravelshow.com
Get moving on that resolution to see the world right here in NYC as over 500 destinations tempt you with their sandy beaches and new attractions.

WEDDINGS

Lovesick Wedding Expo

Jan. 9, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.
Red Hook Labs
133 Imlay St., Brooklyn
$15, Lovesickexpo.com

For more events go to **metro.us**

Whether you're planning a wedding to plan or just getting a head start on your fantasy, the Lovesick Wedding Expo is the place to immerse yourself in every detail, from the flowers to the floor plan, plus a runway wedding dress fashion show and wine tastings for all your reception planning needs, ofc.

MUSIC

Winter Jazzfest

Jan. 13-17
Multiple locations
$25-$145, Winterjazzfest.com
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T. MICHELLE MURPHY

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Eat right for your resolution

A better 2016 begins with upgrading your dining experience.

EVA KIS
@thisiskis
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A new year means it's resolution time again. Whether you're looking to eat more healthfully, kick the booze habit for a month or be a more adventurous foodie in 2016, we've got some ideas about where to go to keep any resolution.

Creative mocktails for Sober January

Depending on how intense your relationship is with alcohol, giving up booze for a month can be a great exercise in finding other ways to have fun. (Bonus: You'll sleep better when you haven't been drinking.) Plus, bartenders are creating a ton of amazing ingredients right now — all those amazing housemade sodas, new bitters and mixers like tea — that don't need liquor to prop them up. Roll up to Chelsea brunch staple **Cookshop** (156 10th Ave.) and skip the booze for a ginger lemonade or the housemade version of grape soda with orgeat syrup and lime.

You've never had tastier healthful choices

If losing weight is your goal in the New Year, changing what you eat accounts for 80 percent of weight loss. The past year was filled with problematic news about meat, sugar, salt and dairy, which may sound like all the good things in life, but there are plenty of spots already cooking right. When it comes to indulgent eating, our favorite spot is the Lower East Side's **El Rey** (100 Stanton St.), where veggie-forward eats like the Avocado del Sur — housemade chimichurri makes it the king of avocado toasts — and raw power-packed Chia Seed Breakfast Pudding will get you excited about eating lighter.

Make your plate socially conscious

There are plenty of reasons to change what you're eating that have nothing to do with losing weight: the environmental impact of exotic ingredients, ethical concerns about farm-raised animals, the conditions under which workers produce the food we eat. Bushwick's **Faro** (436 Jefferson St.) elevates the farm-to-table concept by house-milling its heirloom grains, keeping seafood limited to local fish and using only seasonal produce. Plus, the Roman gnocchi is the finest plate of pasta you'll find in the city.

Fine dining that's worth the splurge

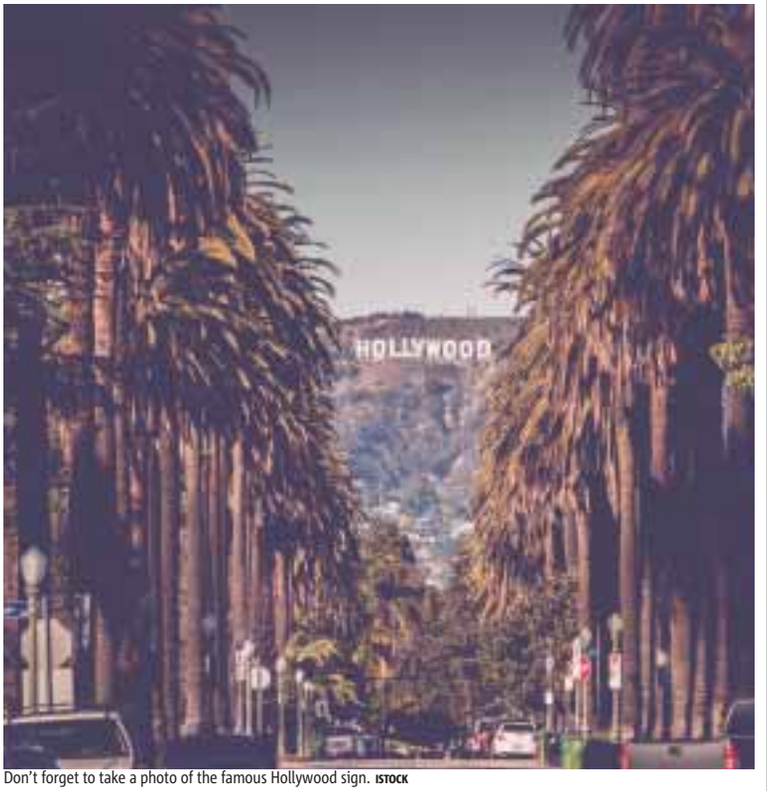
Admit it — you talk a good foodie game, but 90 percent of what you've been eating is from restaurants around your office and apartment. Left to your own devices, the chances of taking a risk with a new dish or switching trains to check out a new spot aren't as good as you'd like them to be. So let us give you a sure bet: Take a four-course journey through France's Alsace region at **Gabriel Kreuther** (41 W. 42nd St., Midtown West), which earned a spot on every 2015 best-of list as a new fine dining classic.

There's life beyond NYC

Eating like the locals is essential to traveling — you wouldn't miss the ramen at Saikoro in Tokyo, or the exquisite and, happily, dirt cheap wine found only in Parisian bodegas. Until you accrue the vacation time (and cash) to party in Rio, there's Greenpoint's new Brazilian hot spot **Cozinha Latina** (37 Greenpoint Ave.) Split a Coconut for Two, which gets its kick from sugar cane spirits, alongside creamy catupiry cheese-and-chicken croquettes and new-to-you ingredients like chayote and chicken hearts.

How to spend two days in LA

The head of Kiehl's tells us which Los Angeles spots not to miss.



Don't forget to take a photo of the famous Hollywood sign. ISTOCK

Los Angeles holds many charms for Kiehl's USA president Chris Salgardo, who says it's one of his favorite places to visit for business. (Good thing, too — he flies there about twice a month; California is the skin-care brand's biggest market in the U.S. outside of New York.)

"California was my home for so many years," says Salgardo, who is based in New York City but grew up in Thousand Oaks, California.

"When I go, there's a feeling of comfort and familiarity," adds Salgardo, whose company has 63 free-standing U.S. stores, and one spa in New York City. "I love the fact that there are so many different things to see — it's the entertainment capital of the world. I love just going down Hollywood Boulevard, even when it was filled with seedy theaters. There's so much happening at the Disney Concert Hall, and let's not forget about the fabulous shopping on Rodeo Drive."

Here are Salgardo's tips for making the most of two workdays in Los Angeles.

How to get to town from the airport

La Cienega. It cuts right through the city, and you can be in West Hollywood or Beverly Hills in 20 minutes.

Where to go right when you land

Farmers Market (6333 W. Third St.). The best donut place in the whole world is there: **Bob's Coffee and Doughnuts** (Stall 450). Get there early in the morning and get them piping hot.

Where to sleep

L'Ermitage Beverly Hills (9291 Burton Way, Beverly Hills) is my home away from home for the best service and privacy. The service cannot be beat — they know your name, they give you anything you want. If it's 11 o'clock, and you want cheesy mashed potatoes, they'll make it for you. The hotel can be completely sold out yet you'd never really know it. It's so quiet, it's so discreet, and I just love that.

Power breakfast or lunch spot

Soho House (9200 Sunset Blvd., West Hollywood) has the best views and best networking in L.A.

Best place to have a productive business meeting

Palihouse (8465 Holloway Dr., West Hollywood) is tucked away, but easy to get to for private meetings.

Team outing

Griffith Observatory (2800 E. Observatory Road) for outdoor fun and to see the "other" stars in L.A. The views are incredible, and you get something that you just don't expect in Los Angeles.

Best boite

Akbar (4356 Sunset Blvd.) is a great place to hang with the trendy Silver Lake crowd. The Friday happy hour is the best time — totally yuppy with a little trendiness.

Killing time

Los Angeles County Museum of Art (5905 Wilshire Blvd.) for the incredible art, especially its Broad Contemporary Art Museum, to see some of the best Jeff Koons pieces.

Favorite tourist trap

Knott's Berry Farm (8039 Beach Blvd., Buena Park) for its famed chicken dinner and Old West theme park.

Essential chow

Du-par's (6333 W. Third St.) The French toast is addictive. It's done with the challah bread and melted butter. Instead of maple syrup, have them bring you the boysenberry syrup, and you'll be in heaven. And **Maria's Ramada** (1064 N. Kingsley Dr.) for authentic Mexican food.

Before you leave

Hollywood Boulevard. Everybody wants a souvenir with the Hollywood sign, and you're going to find that in spades out there. You can also get that cut-out of Brad Pitt. REUTERS

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Piazza enters MLB Hall of Fame as a Met

The Mets' slugger caps his career with a ticket to Cooperstown.

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Mike Piazza is one of two members of the 2016 MLB Hall of Fame class. GETTY IMAGES

A one-time 1,398th overall pick, and later all-time great catcher and Met is in the MLB Hall of Fame.

It was announced Wednesday afternoon that Mike Piazza, one of the most prolific-hitting backstops in baseball history would take his rightful place in Cooperstown, alongside first-ballot Hall of Famer Ken Griffey Jr., who got in with over 99 percent of the vote.

Piazza received 83 percent of the vote, greater than the 75 percent required to enter the hallowed halls. Griffey, on the other hand, dominated the ballots, appearing on a record 437 of 440.

The fact that Piazza, who belted more home runs (427) in his career than any other catcher in the history of baseball, had to wait this long to get the call from the Hall is tied to the persistent rumors that he may have dabbled in performance-enhancing drugs during his playing days.

With his induction, Piazza will become something of a trail blazer as voters are seemingly softening their stance on alleged and confirmed "steroid guys" like Barry Bonds and Roger Clemens.

Piazza will become just the second player in history to wear a Mets cap on his Hall of Fame plaque. Tom Seaver, a 1992 inductee, also donned the Mets colors in Cooperstown.

Piazza also played for the Dodgers, Marlins, Padres and A's but his eight-year stint in New York stands out.

"If the Hall came to me and said, 'We want you to go in as a Dodger, 'I'd say, 'Well, then I'll go in as nothing,'" Piazza said in his 2013 autobiography. "I just wouldn't feel comfortable with 'LA' stamped on my head for all of eternity."

Piazza is regarded as one of the top offensive catchers in league history, as he is fourth all time among catchers in RBIs. In 16 MLB seasons, Piazza drove in 1,335 runs and registered 2,127 hits.

Jeff Bagwell, Tim Raines and Trevor Hoffman narrowly missed being inducted, each getting more than 60 percent of the vote.

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THE WAY-TO-EARLY TOP 10 LIST

FANTASY SPORTS

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The Steelers high-powered offense will again, in 2016, be a good source of individual fantasy points. GETTY IMAGES

For the next eight months, we can't be wrong. It's a beautiful feeling.

Real fantasy football decisions won't come until September, meaning we'll argue about all sorts of things related to the future. The best place to argue is at the top.

Obviously, quarterbacks are out of the discussion as they have been for years. Note that eight of fantasy's top-12 point-per-game QBs went after the ninth round this season. As for running backs, there's going to be a lot of "never again" people converting to the zero-RB religion. The bust rate at the position was an outlier this year and running backs are still very viable at the top, but we do need to be careful with two-down power backs — even studs like Adrian Peterson and Todd Gurley.

On to the outrageously early 2016 top-10:

1 Antonio Brown, WR, PIT

Ben Roethlisberger played in 12 games this season. In those, Brown had a 16-game pace of 158 catches for 2,132 yards and 13 touchdowns. The NFL records are 143 catches and 1,964 yards. He'll be just 28 years old next season.

2 Julio Jones, WR, ATL

Matt Ryan was not good, ranking 13th in YPA and 20th in passer rating as he struggled through the first year in Kyle Shanahan's offense. Julio still had a historic season with nine 100-yard games and 136 catches (tied with Brown for second-most ever). The 26-year-old Jones has missed one game in the last two years.

3 Odell Beckham, WR, NYG

Through two NFL seasons, Beckham is averaging 6.9 catches for 102.0 yards and 0.92 touchdowns. There's little reason to think he can't sustain that, especially with the Giants' inept defense showing no signs of immediate improvement.

4 DeAndre Hopkins, WR, HOU

Even with Brian Hoyer likely back as the Texans' starter, Hopkins is a safe pick due to volume. Bill O'Brien's team ranked third in seconds between plays and first in plays per game. Hopkins averaged an immense 12.0 targets per game.

5 Le'Veon Bell, RB, PIT

Two knee surgeries in the last two years is a concern, but at least the ACL is intact. Bell is the rare elite talent in top-tier offense that dominates in both the pass game and at the goal-line.

6 Allen Robinson, WR, JAX

Blake Bortles' sophomore season numbers were Favre-esque. Another leap into his third year means there's room for A-Rob to build on his 80-1,400-14 breakout.

7 Rob Gronkowski, TE, NE

It didn't feel like Gronk had a very good year, but he still went over 1,100 yards and 10 touchdowns for the second straight season. A better play in touchdown-heavy formats.

8 Dez Bryant, WR, DAL

Dez broke his foot in Week 1 and Tony Romo played in four games all year. Throw it out. In the previous three seasons, the 27-year-old Bryant never had less than 88 catches, 1,233 yards or 12 touchdowns.

9 David Johnson, RB, ARZ

Similar to Le'Veon, Johnson is uniquely gifted in the pass game and has been the Cardinals' preferred option at the goal-line. They've also made him an every-down player in the most critical of situations.

10 A.J. Green, WR, CIN

Five seasons in the NFL, five 1,000-yard seasons. Also only missed four games during that span and averaged 0.59 TDs per game. Safe as they come.

NBA news

Victor Oladipo did fine in a bench role, averaging similar numbers to what he did as a starter despite getting six less minutes per game. Now things are trending back up. Coach Scott Skiles is talking about keeping Oladipo in the starting five even when Elfrid Payton (ankle) returns. If that's in a point guard role or includes some point guard duties, Oladipo will flourish.

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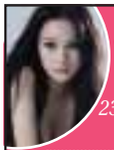
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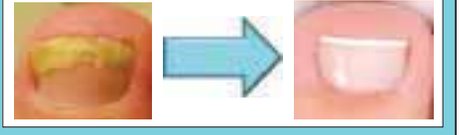

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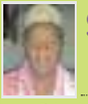

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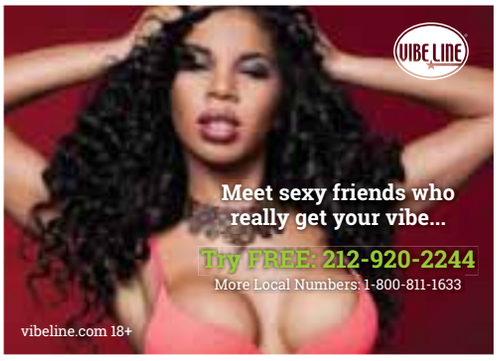

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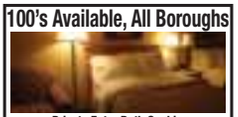

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Rearrange the letters in each row to form a word. Write your answers into the blank grid. The first letter from each word, reading down, will spell the mystery word.

1	A	B	E	F	L
2	P	I	L	Y	M
3	C	A	B	I	S
4	G	D	E	D	E
5	E	R	A	R	R

1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

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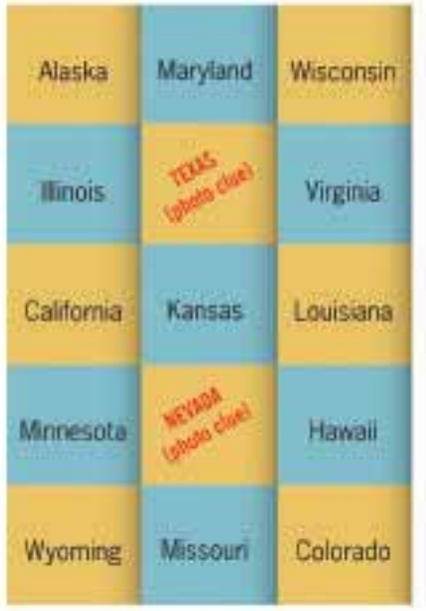
QUIZ QUEST



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All the answers to the clues are in the boxes, either as a word or picture. Solve all the clues and cross off the boxes. One word will be left over. This is the mystery answer.

Clues:

- Where Rainy Lake and Mille Lacs can be found
- Eight US presidents have been born here
- The state flag is a white pelican on a blue background
- State that borders eight others
- Where Crestone Peak can be found
- It's known as the "Old Line State"
- The largest state in terms of total land area
- "All for Our Country" is the state's motto
- The most recent state to join the US
- Home state of the Dynamo MLS side
- The birthplace of author Ernest Hemingway
- The most populous state
- Its capital city is Cheyenne
- Home of Wacond Lake and Cheney Reservoir

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Across

1 TV hookup
4 Light pink wine
8 Risque
12 Sponge feature
13 Livy's "it was"
14 Golfer Lorena —
16 Verse forms
17 Hollywood's -- Powers
18 Dry humor
19 Banjo cousin
20 Jam producers
22 Utter bliss
24 Anka's "Eso —"
25 Wheel buy (2 wds.)
26 Deep red
28 Slow pitch
31 "Quo --?"
34 Dwindle
35 Texas town
36 Fiji discoverer — Tasman
37 Very strict
38 Herr von Bismarck
39 Shaggy flowers
40 Tip of a pyramid
41 Refrigerator gas
42 "Harper Valley —"
43 Woolgatherers?
44 Comic-book thud
45 Donated
47 Earthshaking
51 Counter-culture slogan (2 wds.)
55 Dernier —
56 Got underway
57 Be like uranium
58 Flip through
59 Become acclimated
60 A Marx
61 Habitual
62 Canary's dinner
63 Gardner of mystery
64 Yes vote

Down

1 Russian export
2 Lowlife
3 Home tel.
4 Shark clinger
5 Expound at length
6 Margarita rim
7 Footnote abbr. (2 wds.)
8 Mr. Dangerfield
9 Field units
10 It came from Mexico
11 Egg part
12 Preside at tea
15 Hirt and Gore
20 Chignons
21 Diminished slowly
23 Opossum grippers
26 Goes postal
27 DOS alternative
29 Prefix for pod
30 Kind of companion
31 Siren
32 Lie adjacent
33 Rabble-rouser
34 Towel off
35 Soil aerators
37 Colder and wetter
41 Like a knight's lady
43 Tied the score
44 Scarab
46 Plugged in
47 Eddy
48 Hatfield foe
49 In a foul mood
50 Movie theater
51 G-men
52 Magnifying glass
53 Lap dog, slangily
54 Gen. — Bradley
58 Tijuana "Mrs."

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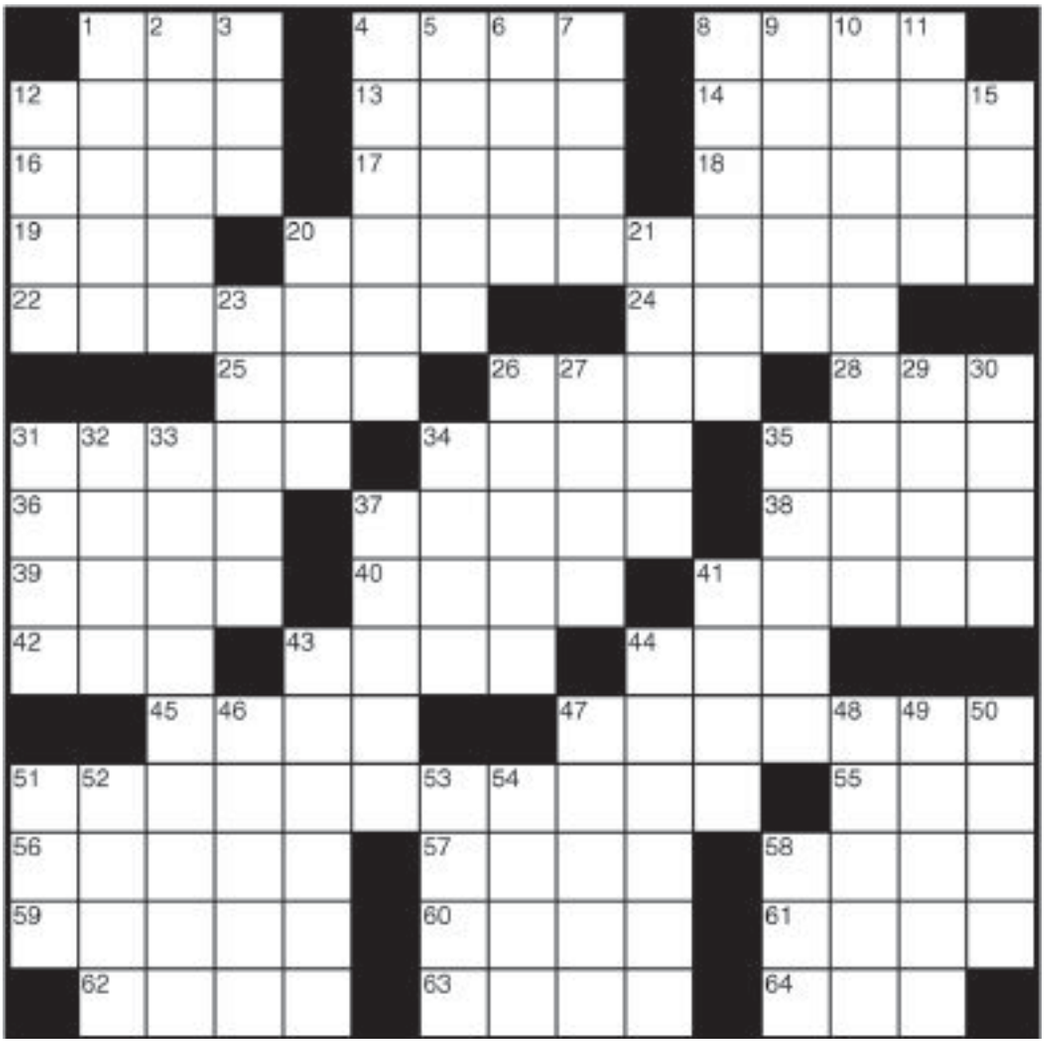

games

metro.us/horoscopes

Aries A learning experience will lead to more cash, higher self-esteem and a brighter future. Love is on the rise, and a promise can be made.

Taurus Make travel plans or sign up for something that will add to your resume. Clear up personal paperwork and address concerns involving institutions.

Gemini Express your feelings and find out where you stand. Hemming and hawing will not help you make plans for the future.

Cancer Explore your relationship options. Make a move to accommodate your current situation. Don't bicker over things you cannot change.

Leo Sign up for an adventure or take part in something that is challenging if you want to meet like-minded people. Love and romance are highlighted.

Virgo Step outside your comfort zone and put an end to whatever is holding you back. Once you put that behind you, opportunity will open.

Libra Book a trip or take time off to share something special with a loved one. Discussing your plans will give you the incentive to work hard.

Scorpio Watch your money and the people you are financially connected to. Offer innovative ideas to make sure you get the service and help you require.

Sagittarius You'll be tempted to jump into something that requires more thought and investigation. Slow down and be smart.

Capricorn Get your act together and put the past behind you. Don't fall victim to a dishonest peer or someone trying to take advantage of you.

Aquarius Conversations will bring about positive change. Don't dwell on past regrets or let someone's emotional indulgence drag you down.

Pisces Revisit a dilemma in order to figure out a solution. Putting the past behind you will allow you greater freedom to pursue something. EUGENIA LAST

metro.us/sudoku

easy

9	1			2	5			8
						6		9
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